

Salmon Farmers Association (BCSFA) and other salmon farmers in Canada have adopted American-set standards for this, of 45 days. However, this standard is not enforced and there are indications that some farmers use a 21-day period. Net and equipment manufacturing, the use of anti-foulants on nets or pesticides applied directly on the fish, the composition and nutritional quality of feed, are other areas where standards have not yet been established.

The industry often states that it should be self-regulating in these respects. This may suggest an idealistic attitude but in fact the main preoccupation of the industry is to ensure reasonable profits and avoid being saddled by excessive, rigid, and conflicting regulations at different levels of jurisdiction. A major concern of the industry is to have input into the regulatory process. As a means of ensuring this, representatives of the industry (nation-wide) have been in contact with the Canadian General Standards Board (under Supply and Services) to discuss the establishment of industry standards. This initiative has however been temporarily postponed on the basis that it is too early for such action in the development of the industry and due to the lack of the necessary scientific information for the establishment of meaningful standards.

The need to establish standards for aquaculture equipment and products is apparently recognized by the federal and provincial governments, which think that the establishment of industry standards developed on a consensus basis will help government regulators. However, the establishment of standards based on consensus is a second-best solution that can last only as long as the necessary scientific knowledge is lacking.

The research and development necessary to obtain this knowledge must be one of the first priorities of governmental research: into, for example, the time required for the elimination of drug residues from fish flesh, and the potential for bioaccumulation of chemical pesticides that could be used in fish farming. Such questions and many others especially in the areas of fish disease, genetics and the environment, must be answered on a priority basis before intensifying long-term government research into future aquaculture candidate species. This will enable the development of an industry able to benefit from such long term research and exploit it commercially.

The present government regulatory approach is to wait for the manufacturers of these trade-mark products to come forward with the